
VANTAGEVILLAGER

In This Issue:



Welcome to the Vantage Villager Quarterly Newsletter

We hope you find the information throughout useful and informative. If you ever have an idea for an article, or any feedback you'd like to share, please contact the editor at:

newsletter@vantagehoa.org

All submissions will be reviewed by the editor and published subject to space available and relevant subject matter.

Vantage Online

Visit us at vantagehoa.org to find minutes from Board meetings, view sample disclosure package materials, and learn about what's going on in our community. You can also send questions to the Board.

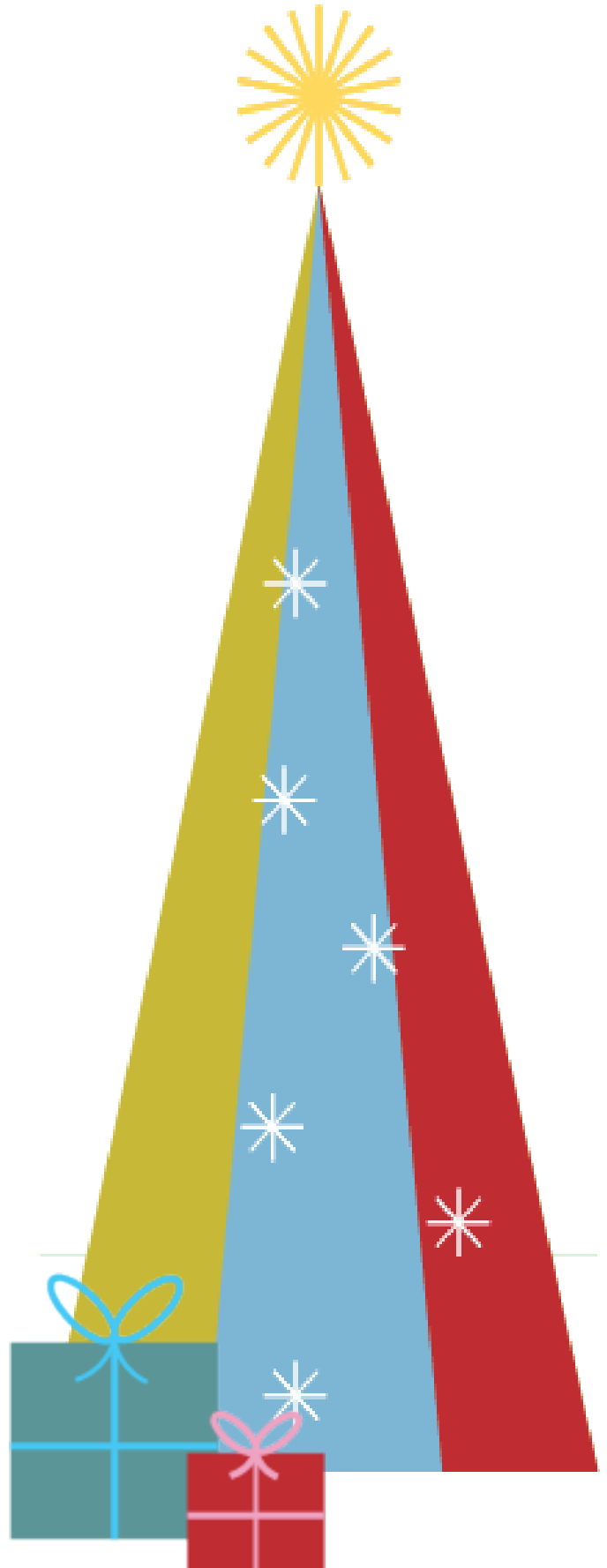
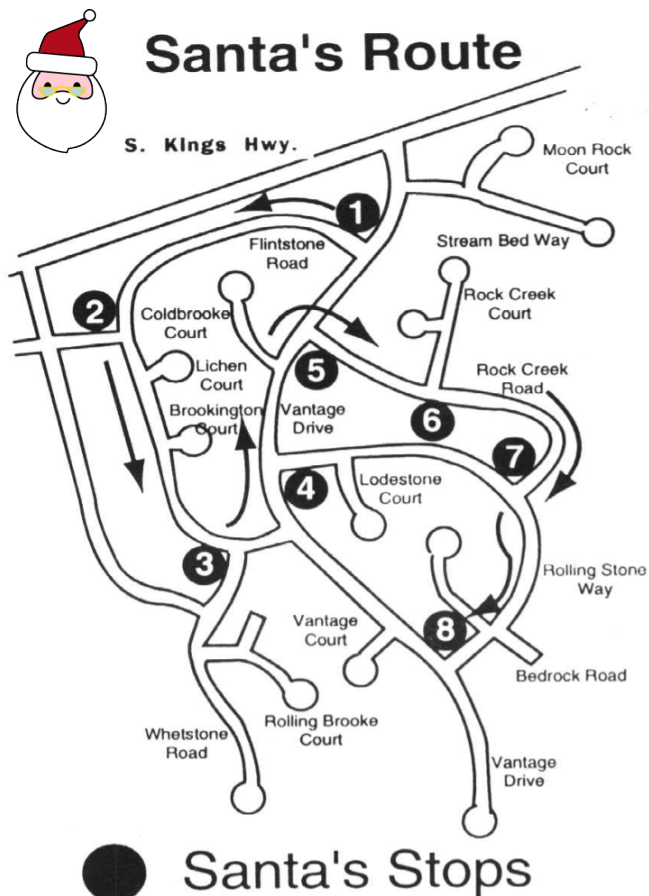
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Santa Claus is Coming to Town!

Santa will arrive near the top of Vantage Drive and Flintstone Road promptly at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 17 astride a Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Squad Truck! The truck will make eight stops at different locations in Vantage as indicated on the map below. At each stop he will greet the children, give them a treat, and pose briefly for photos. The siren will probably not be sounded, but the lights may be flashing when the truck is moving. In the event of a fire or rescue emergency during the visit, the truck will depart and Santa will complete his visit by car.



Only You Can Prevent Holiday Fires

By Dylan Moore

While the holidays are a wonderful time to gather and celebrate with family and friends, they also present fire risks and hazards in your home.

As a firefighter with 15 years of experience, I would like to share common causes of house fires and some tips as to what you can do to avoid a fire at your home. Please note that what I share is based on my own education and experience and does not necessarily reflect the views of the fire department for which I work.

General safety and prevention tips:

- **Change your smoke detector batteries whenever daylight savings time begins or ends.** If you have an older model, replace the batteries as needed. Newer models usually have the batteries sealed in them and last up to 10 years. Check the expiration date on the detectors (which is usually embossed or printed on the detector) and replace them if needed.
- **Sleep with your bedroom door closed.** Rooms behind closed doors can remain survivable even as the rest of the house becomes deadly.

A closed door can buy you time to escape, or to be rescued.

- **Designate a meeting place.** In the event of a fire, once you have evacuated your house, head to a pre-determined meeting place you have designated with your family. This should be somewhere a safe distance from the house where you can meet arriving firefighters and give them any necessary information about the home or family members.

Causes

- **Cooking is the number one cause of home fires.** It is vital to never leave a stove or oven unattended while it is on. Pots on a burner or food in the oven can rapidly spread fire into your cabinets and to flammable objects near the stove. Remember also when cooking with oil that if it does catch on fire *do not put water on it*, as this can cause a devastating, explosive-like reaction. Place a metal lid or a cover over the pot to smother it. As a last resort, use a dry chemical extinguisher, but this will spread a chemical powder all over your kitchen and require extensive clean up before you can prepare food there again.

Another big culprit is outdoor grilling. You may see several different recommendations, but a minimum distance of 10' from any wall, railing, etc. is a good safe distance. A grill can ignite the side of a house, travel

up the siding, and spread into the house through windows and into the attic.

- **The second leading cause of home fires is heating equipment.**

This includes furnaces, portable heaters, and fireplaces. Make sure that furnaces are properly maintained and functioning as designed, especially gas furnaces. All furnaces should have an emergency cut off; know where this is and if you see or smell smoke coming from your furnace vents, shut the furnace down immediately if you can safely do so.

Space heaters should not be left unattended and should be kept at least three feet from anything flammable. Fireplaces should be kept clean, and chimneys should be inspected every year before use.

- **The next leading cause is electrical fires.** These can be prevented by properly maintaining your home's wiring and making sure not to overload outlets. With the rise of personal electronics, we see many fires caused by charging cell phones and computers. Remember that these devices can heat up as they charge and should not be left unattended on easily flammable materials like bedding or furniture while charging.

Power strips that are both overloaded with plugs and covered by something else can also be a cause for electrical fires. Do not leave clothing or bedding on top of a power strip with multiple plugs. With Christmas approaching, there is also a risk of Christmas trees catching fire. Remember to keep any live trees well-watered to prevent them drying out, and use only indoor lights on the tree.

- **Another recent cause of electric fires has been malfunctioning lithium-ion batteries.** These are present in electric vehicles, electric scooters, lap tops, electronics, toys, wireless headphones, handheld power tools, small and large appliances, and other consumer devices. These batteries can malfunction and create large amounts of toxic smoke and intense fire very quickly.
- **The fourth leading cause is fires caused by smoking materials.** If you do smoke or vape, do not do so in bed or when you are falling asleep. Make sure to properly dispose of ashes and butts. Finally, if you or anyone in the house are using oxygen, do not smoke anywhere near the oxygen delivery system, preferably not inside the house at all.

Happy holidays, and please stay safe this season.

Fox Visits Vantage!

Submitted by Sheridan Ribbing

Our neighbors on Whetstone Road have been visited by a young fox that enjoys sleeping in a leaf pile in the woods behind their house. Occasionally he crosses the bridge, where he poses for a picture and shows off his bobtail. Please enjoy!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please remember to enjoy nature from a distance and do not approach wild animals.

